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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

23 April 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR COLONEL MARTIN

SUBJECT: Preliminary Observations of the COMOR Papers being
Submitted to USIB on 24 April 1963

The most important question coming to mind after reading these COMOR documents is the question of who is responsible for stating photographic quality suitable to meet an intelligence need as stated by COMOR/USIB. COMOR has stated the requirement and then pursuant to that requirement, has stated a photographic quality necessary to satisfy the requirement. I would like to see for NRO guidance, a statement from COMOR of the intelligence requirements including frequency of coverage and projected requirements, and then I would like to have from the exploitation community their comments on the photographic quality required to insure having sufficient image information to satisfy the stated requirement. Quite possibly the COMOR papers do have an input from the exploitation community but I would prefer to see their comments on a separate paper or at least a concurrence statement. The basic problem is partially caused by the fact there are no universal definitions for photographic quality. For example, the COMOR papers continue to refer to Resolution in terms of "___ feet on a side at low contrast." The photographic system specifications used in accepting a camera system for flight are based on Military Standard 150-A, which evaluates a camera system performance on the basis of a line pair having a length to width ratio of 5:1 at 2:1 contrast. This specification cannot be readily equated to the COMOR statement "___ feet on a side at low contrast." At the present time we talk about the photographic quality of MURAL being 10 - 15 feet "resolution." This, in itself is a fairly meaningless term but graphically provides one point of quality on a line representing quality. When LANYARD becomes successful this will provide a second graphic point on a line representing quality, thus a scale will be established by the two systems where relative quality can be assessed relative to LANYARD and MURAL.

NRO and USAF review(s) completed.

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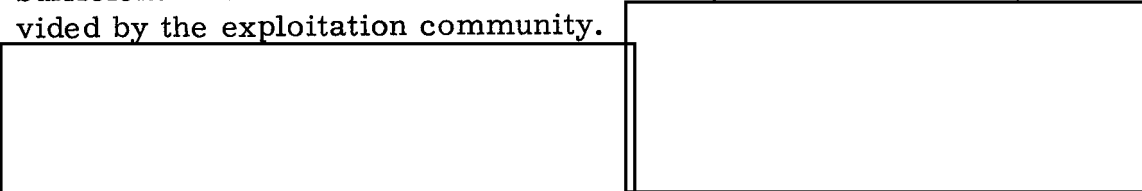
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Decisions regarding the types of sensors required to provide sufficient information to answer a USIB requirement must be provided by the exploitation community.



The problems to be encountered in exploitation would include new training requirements, possibly different educational requirements, changes in exploitation and reporting techniques, and equipment changes.

Another problem that comes to mind is that of the COMOR providing their views and comments on vulnerability, swath-width and orbital programming flexibility. I believe these areas should not be assumed to be the prerogative of the COMOR, but their comments regarding vulnerability as stated in the NIE 11-3-62 are helpful to our programming. For example, swath-width can be achieved by many different methods, the cost effectiveness of which might result in the selection of more missions with narrower swath-width resulting in the same general coverage. This is an NRO problem.

I remain skeptical of the capabilities of the MURAL program to provide a useful surveillance capability. The quality of the photography resulting from this program would provide nothing but gross indicators, such as major aircraft movements, which one can assume the enemy would do at night or in bad weather knowing we have some sort of photographic capability. The frequency of coverage stated in these papers appears to be relatively consistent between DIA and CIA and would require a major increase in the mission rates in the search and surveillance areas. After USIB approves the COMOR working papers, the NRO shall probably be obliged to request USIB to provide the mission rate that would be acceptable. The stated rates cannot be realistically achieved at least in the next 12 to 24 months and some lesser rate of mission scheduling must be accepted. The CIA paper states that 50 days of coverage of the Soviet Union, with multiple passes per day, has provided approximately 90% useful coverage. The COMOR requirement apparently is one of 100% coverage every 45 days of the important 6 million sq mi of the

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Sino-Soviet Bloc and 100% coverage of the remaining 6 million sq mi of the Sino-Soviet Bloc every 90 days. To satisfy this requirement a mission rate several orders of magnitude greater than the present rate would be required. I am not sure what percentage figure of coverage at some quality and cloud condition would be acceptable realistically, instead of the 100% figures used in the COMOR papers.



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NRO
review

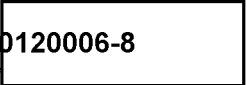
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MEMORANDUM


15 April 63

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Dear Pete,

You will recall I mentioned at our Saturday meeting that I am attempting to establish a more formal tie-in between the NRO and the JCS. The attached recommendation follows the approach I have discussed with Ros. The proposed solution, in addition to effecting formal coordination between the peripheral activities of the JCS and the overflight activities of the NRO, will formalize the coordination by the JCS of the resources of unified and specified commands which may be required to support NRO overflight activities.

In addition, it will insure that the NRO has available the best military operational knowledge and experience, a point on which the Chiefs expressed particular concern during my last discussion with them.


Brockway McMillanDr. H. Scoville, Jr.
DDR/CIA25X1
NRO
review(s)

1. Civilian Military
2. Single Project Management
3. Don't mess with successful program